

We have one national security commitment." And I thank him for giving me this opportunity to be the civilian representative of the greatest military in the world, bar none. They are the finest military that we have ever had. They have performed magnificently the world over. Janet and I had the opportunity to visit General Tilelli in Korea up on the DMZ in the frozen hills. We've been out in the Persian Gulf where the temperatures ranged from 120 up to 140 degrees. We have been all over the world where our men and women serve us. And I must tell you—there can be no higher honor for me and Janet than to be working on their behalf.

It takes a great tragedy like the U.S.S. *Cole* to remind the American people that our men and women in uniform are serving us. Because of them, you and I are able to sleep safely. We go home tonight and we sleep under that blanket of freedom because of what they do day in and day out, because of the dangers they face day in and day out, because of the lives they put on the line day in and day out. They are great warriors. They are also great musicians, as you've seen. They are great peacekeepers. They are diplomats. But most of all, they're our sons and our daughters, and we must do everything in our power to make sure that we give them everything that they need and deserve in order to continue to serve us in the fashion that they do. That has been our commitment. That will be, hopefully, the commitment of those who will follow.

The film industry plays a critical role. On the way in, a number of the television reporters were asking us, "Why are you doing this? Why are you here in Hollywood?" Well, Hollywood has played a role in the security of this country throughout our history. If you go back to World War I, it was the movie star celebrities who were helping to push those Liberty Bonds. If you look at World War II, many of the celebrities were raising over \$1 billion to support that war effort. And then there are the film clips that we have seen here tonight—"Saving Private Ryan" by Steven Spielberg; "U-571," "The Perfect Storm," [and] "Top Gun" that Jerry Bruckheimer produced earlier. And we are going to witness another movie produced by Jerry with Michael Day, "Pearl Harbor," coming out on Memorial Day. And, of course, there's another great tribute to our military by Cuba Gooding, Jr. in "Men of Honor."

The film industry is important in shaping what people think about our military and supporting them, and we wanted to be here to say something to Hollywood you don't hear very often, and that's "Thank you." Thank you for all that you do in portraying the men and women who serve us, their patriotism, their courage, their sense of honor. On behalf of all of us, we in the Pentagon want to say thank you to Hollywood.

Tonight, we're going to present the first Citizen Patriot Award. And again, I was asked on the way in, "Why Valenti?" Of course, you have to say, well, why not Valenti? . . . We are celebrating a patriot in Jack Valenti. He is a veteran who flew 50 combat missions over Italy in World War II, who went on to public service in the White House with President Johnson, who has continued his service to this film industry but also to this country. And you know that he's a man of great language and literature and passion and commitment. He has been a strong advocate on behalf of the men and women who are serving us in the military. So if we're looking for a citizen patriot, at the very top of the list we take Jack Valenti for all that he represents.

I will tell you that patriotism is in his blood. I remember reading a book that he wrote some years ago, and I came across a passage. He said, "I remember my white-mustached grandfather, Sicilian, proud, and dignified, and dominant, speaking to me and his dozen grandchildren in heavy accents, thick with an odd mix of Sicily and the Texas gulf coast, and he said, 'Love this country, be proud of this country. It's a good land.'"

Jack Valenti has lived up to the words of his grandfather. He is proud of this country. He is a proud patriot. And I can't think of a better summation than one I read from Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, who also was a warrior, during the Civil War. Holmes said that, "Through our great and good fortune, in our youth our hearts were touched with fire. And it was given to us to learn at the outset that life is a profound and passionate thing. And while we're permitted to scorn nothing but indifference and don't pretend to undervalue the worldly rewards of ambition, we have seen with our own eyes beyond and above the gold fields, those snowy heights of honor. It's for us to bear the reports of those who follow. But above all, we have learned that whether a man accepts from Fortune her spade and will look downward and dig, or from Aspiration her axe and cord and will scale the ice, the one and only success which is his to command is to bring to his work a mighty heart."

For more than half a century, Jack Valenti has brought to his work a mighty heart, and we are eternally grateful for that.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN P. MACKINNON

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. HOYER, and I wish to recognize Special Agent John MacKinnon of the U.S. Customs Service for his exemplary service with the Office of Congressional Affairs for the past two years, including his work as the acting team leader for appropriations since May of this year. Special Agent MacKinnon has provided extraordinary assistance to the Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service and General Government including planning and coordinating important Subcommittee travel to review counter-narcotics programs in the Andean drug source countries, port security and drug trafficking in Miami and the West Coast, and Customs automation projects at busy commercial ports such as Detroit and New York. Mr. MacKinnon also has been highly responsive to the requirements of this Subcommittee in both anticipating and responding to our information requirements, and in facilitating any hearings or other meetings between the Subcommittee and the Customs Service. He has brought great professionalism to his work, and has always contributed a fair measure of his energy, enthusiasm and a dram of Scottish wit to all his endeavors.

Special Agent MacKinnon came to his current assignment after a full and productive decade carrying out investigations of narcotics

smuggling, illegal export of munitions and sensitive technology, and trafficking in child pornography. This work included six years leading undercover investigations of international child pornography, many of which involved the Internet. Out of that work, Mr. MacKinnon moved on to be one of the first investigators to work in and develop the Customs Service's Cyber-Smuggling Center. He has developed a wide reputation for his work in the field of Internet investigations, testifying before our counterpart Subcommittee in the Senate, assisting foreign police in international investigations, and teaching undercover courses for State and local police on Internet crimes against children.

Special Agent MacKinnon will soon depart for Boston to take up a new assignment in the field as a Group Supervisor in the Office of the Special Agent in Charge officers. From our perspective, he has served Customs well, and in so doing has done the same for our Subcommittee and the Congress. We wish him all the best in his new assignment and expect to see great things as his career progresses.

LEGISLATION ABOLISHING THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2000

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce an amendment to the Constitution abolishing the Electoral College.

Mr. Speaker, on November 7, 2000 two Presidents may have been elected.

Vice President GORE received a majority of the popular vote cast that day and Governor Bush may have received a majority of the electoral college electors.

Regardless of your political viewpoints, I believe that from this point forward the President of the United States should be elected by direct popular vote.

This legislation will abolish the electoral college and ensure that when the American people step into the voting booth they, and not a slate of faceless electors, will choose the next President.

The Founding Fathers installed the electoral college as a mechanism to ensure only the best and brightest individuals of their time served as our President. This relic of a bygone era was created because the Founding Fathers did not trust Americans to learn all they needed to know to make an informed decision.

But times have changed and the American people have come along way from those days.

We now live in an era of high-speed Internet access, instantaneous media coverage of international events, 24-hour news stations, and cross-country flights. There is no reason all Americans can't access the information they need to make an informed choice about who they want as their President.

There was a lot of discussion about trust in the recent Presidential campaign—on both sides: trusting people to make their own choices about retirement savings; trusting seniors to choose their own prescription drug

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plans; trusting women to control their reproductive health. Well, if we are going to entrust Americans to make these personal choices, we must also trust them to choose the President they believe best represents their interests.

Americans do not need to be protected from their own decisions—it's time to trust them.

In the 20th Century we gave women the right to vote, allowed direct elections of our United States Senators, and passed numerous

voting initiatives designed to open the polling place to all citizens wishing to participate.

In the 21st Century, we must to sweep away these last archaic roadblocks and move forward to a truly modern democracy.